

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 ACDA-12 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 MCT-01 EA-10

OMB-01 TRSE-00 /118 W

-----111323 161105Z /15

R 160645Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0905

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

DET 4 AFSCF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VICTORIA 0436

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, PEPR, MARR, SE, CH, KE, US

SUBJECT: RENE ADOPTS HARD LINE IN EXPLAINING RECENT GOVERNMENT  
SECURITY ACTIONS

REF: A) VICTORIA 418; B) VICTORIA 395; C) VICTORIA 394

1. SUMMARY: SINCE HIS MAY 11 RETURN TO SEYCHELLES FROM VISITS  
TO PRC AND NORTH KOREA, SEYCHELLES PRESIDENT F.A. RENE HAS  
DELIVERED NATION-WIDE ADDRESS AND HELD MONTHLY PRESS CONFERENCE.  
AS EXPECTED, BOTH SPEECH AND PRESS CONFERENCE FOCUSED PRIMARILY  
ON ALLEGED COUNTER-COUP ATTEMPT WHICH RESULTED IN APRIL 29-30  
ARREST OF LARGE NUMBER OF SEYCHELLOIS AND WAS SAID TO HAVE  
INVOLVED PLANNED INVASION BY FOREIGN MERCENARIES. RENE'S  
REMARKS CLEARLY INDICATED THAT HE IS TAKING PERCEIVED SECURITY  
THREAT SERIOUSLY AND GAVE NO SIGNAL THAT TWENTY SEYCHELLOIS  
CURRENTLY IN DETENTION FOR ALLEGED ANTI-GOVERNMENT PLOTTING WOULD  
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SOON BE RELEASED. HE TIED CONTINUED DETENTIONS TO PERCEIVED EXTERNAL  
THREAT OF "INVASION" BY MERCENARIES RECRUITED BY EXILED GOVERNMENT  
FIGURES OUSTED IN JUNE, 1977 COUP D'ETAT. IN RESPONDING TO  
REPORTER'S QUESTION ON STATUS OF U.S.A.F. TRACKING STATION IN  
LIGHT OF GOS REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF TWO AMERICANS SAID TO BE  
ENGAGED IN COUP PLOTTING, RENE GAVE FRESH ASSURANCES THAT GOS  
INTENDS TO STRICTLY ABIDE BY TERMS OF 1976 TEN-YEAR RENTAL AGREEMENT.

ON HIS TRIP TO PRC AND NORTH KOREA, RENE CONFIRMED THAT CHINESE WILL BUILD A LARGE SECONDARY SCHOOL (COST ESTIMATED AT DOL 2.9 MILLION) AND SAID VISITS WERE INFORMATIVE AND USEFUL. AT SAME TIME, RENE STRESSED THAT SEYCHELLES WILL NOT ADOPT ANY FOREIGN MODEL IN DEVELOPING ITS OWN SOCIALIST SOCIETY. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS ON ALLEGED COUNTER-COUP ATTEMPT - IN HIS MAY 13 SPEECH, RENE CLAIMED THAT GOS HAD BEEN AWARE FOR MONTHS THAT EX-MINISTERS OF DEPOSED GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN RECRUITING MERCENARIES TO "INVADE" SEYCHELLES AND "BRING BACK CAPITALIST SYSTEM." HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME SEYCHELLOIS DID NOT WANT GOVERNMENT TO SUCCEED IN CREATING A NEW "SOCIALIST" SOCIETY BASED ON EQUALITY AND CLAIMED TWENTY SEYCHELLOIS CURRENTLY IN DETENTION WERE ABETTING PLANNED EXTERNALLY-MOUNTED MERCENARY ASSAULT BY SERVING AS MESSENGERS BETWEEN EXILED FORMER LEADERS AND LOCAL DISSIDENTS OR WOULD FUNCTION AS LOCAL GUIDES FOR MERCENARIES. OTHERS WERE SAID TO BE ENGAGING IN ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN OR PASSING INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ABOUT ARMY. (NOTE: CURIOUSLY, NO MENTION WAS MADE OF AN ARMED ROLE FOR LOCAL OPPONENTS DESPITE GOS CLAIM TO HAVE SEIZED LARGE WEAPONS CACHE.) AS A CONSEQUENCE, RENE SAID, THEY HAD "LOST THEIR RIGHT TO LIVE AMONG THE PEOPLE". RENE ADDED THAT OTHER LOCAL OPPONENTS OF THE REGIME WERE BEING CAREFULLY WATCHED AND SAID FURTHER ARRESTS WERE POSSIBLE. ONCE GOS BECAME CONVINCED "AFTER VERY CAREFUL STUDY" THAT "BATTLE PLANS" HAD BEEN DRAWN UP AND AN ASSAULT DATE SELECTED PRIOR TO JUNE 5 ANNIVERSARY OF COUP D'ETAT WHICH BROUGHT HIS GOVERNMENT TO POWER, RENE SAID IT CONFIDENTIAL

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WAS CLEAR DUTY OF GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT BLOODSHED AND PROTECT NEW SOCIETY. RENE REITERATED SOCIO-ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES OF HIS GOVERNMENT, CLAIMED GOS ENJOYED MASS POPULAR SUPPORT AND EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THERE HAS BEEN "GREAT PROGRESS IN EVERY DIRECTION" DURING PAST ELEVEN MONTHS.

3. IN RESPONDING TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS AT MAY 15 PRESS CONFERENCE, RENE SAID THAT "DESPITE OUR PROTESTS" KENYAN GOVERNMENT'S LACK OF COOPERATION REGARDING GOS ALLEGATION THAT SHIP AND MERCENARIES ARE IN MOMBASSA LEADS HIM TO CONCLUDE THAT KENYANS ARE CONCEALING KNOWLEDGE OF PLOT. CITING SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS, HE DECLINED TO ELABORATE ON MOST QUESTIONS RELATED TO COUNTER-COUP CLAIM. RENE DID SAY THAT EX-MINISTER OF TOURISM AND AVIATION DAVID JOUBERT HAD "PUT PRESSURE" ON FORMER PRESIDENT JAMES MANCHAM TO SUPPORT COUNTER-COUP ATTEMPT AND THAT MANCHAM BECAME INVOLVED FOUR MONTHS AGO. MANCHAM'S ALLEGED ROLE WAS TO OBTAIN FINANCING AND GARNER INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT. RENE SAID REQUEST FOR EXTRADITION OF JOUBERT FROM U.K. BEING CONSIDERED BUT SUCH A MOVE AT THIS TIME "WOULD BREAK CHAIN OF INFORMATION" AND PLACE "SOME PEOPLE IN JEOPARDY." CONCERNING GOS CLAIM TO HAVE SEIZED ARMS CACHE, RENE SAID WEAPONS WERE FROM A PARTICULAR COUNTRY (A FACT TO

WHICH HE PLACED CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE) BUT THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SHOW THEM AT THIS TIME. RENE SAID LOCAL OPPOSITION WAS NEITHER LARGE NOR WELL ORGANIZED AND THAT "THE PEOPLE" WERE HAPPY WITH GOS ACTION AGAINST IT. CONCERNING DETAINEES, RENE SAID PERIOD OF THEIR INCARCERATION WILL DEPEND ON WHAT CONSPIRATORS IN U.K. WILL DO. (COMMENT: RENE'S REMARK LENDS SOME SUBSTANCE TO "HOSTAGE SCENARIO" WHICH CIRCULATED LAST WEEK.) ALTHOUGH TREASON IS A CAPITAL OFFENSE IN SEYCHELLES, RENE SAID DEATH PENALTY WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE IMPOSED IF COURT ACTION IS TAKEN AGAINST DETAINEES.

4. TRACKING STATION - REGARDING REASONS BEHIND GOS REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF TWO CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS AT U.S.A.F. SATELLITE TRACKING STATION (VICTORIA 380; 390 NOTAL), RENE SAID WIFE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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ONE EMPLOYEE (WHO WAS SEIZED BY POLICE APRIL 29) WAS INVOLVED IN ANTI-GOVERNMENT PLOT AND THAT GOVERNMENT HAD "CLEAR INFORMATION" THAT THE SECOND HAD BEEN DISCUSSING "INVASION PLANS" WITH SEYCHELLOIS. IN RESPONSE TO LEADING QUESTION WHETHER ACTIVITIES OF THESE INDIVIDUALS HAD AFFECTED STATUS OF STATION, RENE REPLIED THAT SEYCHELLES HAD ENTERED INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. AND INTENDED TO ADHERE STRICTLY TO THE TERMS OF THAT AGREEMENT.

5. PRESIDENTIAL VISITS TO PRC AND NORTH KOREA - RENE SAID HIS VISITS HAD BEEN VERY USEFUL AND THAT SEYCHELLES HAD MUCH TO LEARN FROM OTHER SOCIALIST STATES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VICTORIA 0436

HE REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT SEYCHELLES WOULD ADOPT ITS OWN FORM OF SOCIALISM WHICH WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO LOCAL SITUATION. CONCERNING AGREEMENT SIGNED IN PEKING UNDER WHICH PRC WILL CONSTRUCT A SECONDARY SCHOOL (REPORTED VICTORIA 331), HE SAID DOLS 2.9 MILLION PROJECT (UP FROM ORIGINAL ESTIMATED 2.1 MILLION) WOULD BE BUILT JOINTLY BY CHINESE AND SEYCHELLOIS WORKERS. (EDUCATION MINISTER HODOUL TOLD CHARGE SCHOOL WILL HAVE 1,200 STUDENTS WHICH, IF ACCURATE, WOULD MAKE IT BY FAR LARGEST SCHOOL IN COUNTRY). RENE SAID SEYCHELLES WOULD "REVOLUTIONIZE" THE WAY TEACHERS ARE TRAINED AND THAT "POLITICAL EDUCATION" WILL BE INTRODUCED TO ACHIEVE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS AND GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

6. MISCELLANEOUS - RENE SCOTCHED SPECULATION THAT TANZANIAN PRESIDENT NYERERE WOULD ATTEND JUNE 5 COUP COMMEMORATIONS BY STATING THAT NO HEADS OF STATE HAD BEEN INVITED. ON PRESS CENSORSHIP, RENE SAID GOS DOES NOT WISH TO RESTRICT FREE PRESS  
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BUT THAT PRESS HAS RESPONSIBILITY NOT TO PUBLISH SENSATIONALIST OR ANTI-GOVERNMENT MATERIAL AND THAT ABUSES IN THIS FIELD COULD LEAD GOS TO IMPOSE CENSORSHIP. SOME JOURNALISTS, HE ADDED, HAVE BEEN "ON THE VERGE" OF IRRESPONSIBILITY.  
MATTSON

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## Message Attributes

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